

# Assistive Technology (AT)

## *Unlocking Human Potential*



*Assistive technology is any device, gadget, hardware or software used by a person with a disability to do things for themselves that might otherwise be difficult or impossible to do because of their disability.*

*Assistive technology eliminates barriers, enhances capabilities, and allows a person with a disability to do the things that we might take for granted in life. It builds upon a person's skills and strengths to assist them in gaining access to their curriculum.*

### **Who qualifies for AT?**

Any student who has a 504 Plan or Individualized Education Plan (IEP)...

The IEP team discusses how the disability affects the student's progress within the curriculum. The team should determine what the student is not able to do that assistive technology could assist with – in order to access their educational environment.

### **How does the team determine the need for assistive technology?**

Assistive technology is considered through a problem solving process that includes trying technology, tools, or strategies to see what works. For example, if a student is having difficulty writing or participating verbally in the classroom – the team would consider needs, implement interventions, and make data based decisions.

### **What makes AT--- assistive technology?**

Some things aren't assistive technology until a student needs them to meet their IEP or 504 goals... assistive technology is determined by how it is used. Assistive technology allows students access their curriculum and the instructional technology in the classroom.

### **Who should we contact for more information?**

Approach your child's case manager or contact your ESE District Office for more information about the procedures in your area for assistive technology supports.

# The Assistive Technology Continuum

*Devices to try if a student has problems with*



## Reading

There is a wide range of AT tools available to help individuals who struggle with reading that help facilitate decoding, reading fluency, and comprehension. Book holders stabilize reading materials for students. Reading guides assist students with tracking text on a page and colored transparencies provide support for text contrast.

Audio books/publications and text-to-speech technology allow students who struggle with reading to listen to text. Audio recording pens enable students to record, store and playback information presented in class. And screen readers can display and read aloud text on a computer screen, including text that has been typed by the user, scanned in from printed pages (e.g., books, letters), or text appearing on the Internet.

## Access

For students with physical disabilities accessing technology through a traditional keyboard, mouse, and screen is a challenge, if not impossible. Alternative input technologies can remove barriers. Some examples include a trackball, eye gaze, touch screen, or switch access.

## Writing

AT can assist students that demonstrate writing difficulties, specifically illegible writing, fatiguing with short or long written assignments, formulating letters, holding writing instruments, limited control to produce written work in an alternate format. There are a variety of writing AT tools that may improve/ increase written output such as pencil grips, alternative keyboards, portable word processing devices, speech to text technology, raised line paper, slant boards.

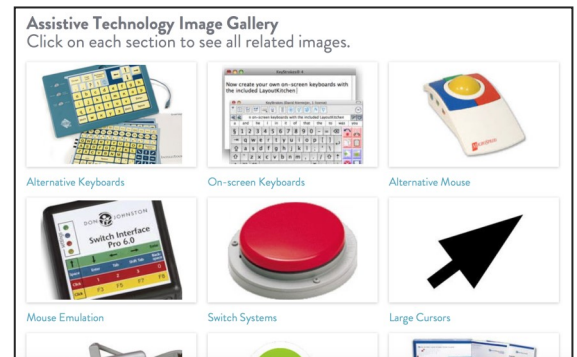
## Communication

AT for expressive communication is referred to as augmentative and alternative communication (AAC). AAC includes all forms of communication (other than oral speech) that are used to express thoughts, needs, wants, and ideas. Examples may include something as simple as a picture board or as complex as a dynamic display communication device.

*Other areas that might be considered for assistive technology intervention include Activities of Daily Living (ADLs); Environmental Control; Hearing; Learning & Organization; Mobility; Recreation & Leisure; Seating & Positioning; Vision; Vocational*

Look through our *Assistive Technology Image Gallery* to explore the world of assistive technology devices!

<http://bit.ly/Lhazfv>





# Technology and Learning Connections

*Increasing student achievement through the systemic alignment of technology, policies, and curriculum in a multi-tiered system of supports.*

## Assistive Technology Resources for Administrators

- A Resource Guide for Administrators about Assistive Technology: Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative <http://www.wati.org/content/supports/free/pdf/ATResourceGuideDec08.pdf>
- QIAT <http://indicators.knowbility.org/indicators.html>
- AT for Administrators: Webinar Pre-Recorded by Penny Reed <http://tinyurl.com/pgnlw67>

## Assistive Technology Resources for Educators

- 10 Things Districts Should Know About Assistive Technology <http://tinyurl.com/q45rxjh>
- FCAT Accommodations <http://www.fldoe.org/ese/pdf/accomm-educator.pdf>
- AT for Young Children <http://www.pacer.org/stc/pubs/ezat.pdf>
- OCALI Assistive Technology Modules on a variety of Topics <http://www.atinternetmodules.org>
- PDA ESE Modules <http://www.pda-ese.org/>
- Exploring Assistive Technology Connections <http://bit.ly/1fzpu1V>

## Assistive Technology Resources for Families

- Family Center on Technology & Disability <http://www.fctd.info/show/home> (BILINGUAL)
- Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights (PACER) <http://www.pacer.org/>

## General Resources

- AT&UDL Loan Library <http://www.at-udl.net/>
- Technology & Learning Connections <http://www.tlc-mtss.com/>
- Florida District Assistive Technology Contacts <http://bit.ly/1xznFHN>
- Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources System <http://www.fdlrs.org/>
- Florida's Multi-Tiered System of Supports <http://www.florida-rti.org>

*This brochure was developed by the statewide Technology Advisory Committee - AT Subcommittee.*



*A Multi-Tiered  
System of Supports*